Swiss Household Panel: Small User Guide
December 2009 (Waves 1 to 10)

Contents

1. SHP Project

Since 1999, the principal aim of the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) is to observe (micro) social change, in particular the dynamics of changing living conditions in the population of Switzerland (http://www.swisspanel.ch/). The project is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and is run at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences (FORS), located at the University of Lausanne.

Since its origin, the survey has covered a broad range of topics and approaches in the social sciences (comprehensive survey) and includes both subjective assessments and concrete information. The following topics are covered: living conditions and living arrangements; housing; employment and labour; income; civic, religious and political participation and behaviour; health and quality of life; social networks and social support; social origin; life history and life events. The field work is conducted annually from September to February by the institute M.I.S. Trend in Lausanne and Bern using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The new (final) data are available for users approximately ten months after collection.

2. Dissemination of Waves 1 to 10

Authorized users (see "Acquiring the data" on our website) will receive a username and password allowing them to download the data from our website (http://www.swisspanel.ch/). Data that can be downloaded are:

- the SHP_I[1] data for the years 1999 through 2008 (waves 1 to 10 for households recruited in 1999);
- the SHP_II[2] data for the years 2004 through 2008 (waves 1 to 5 for households recruited in 2004);
- the SHP biographical data for 5,560 SHP_I individuals;
- the SHP interviewer data for the years 2000, and 2003 to 2008.

As we constantly improve the data quality and correct errors discovered in the data, the users are **asked to use the SHP data from this data delivery even for previous waves**. The **SHP data documentation** and regular **updates** are available on our websites:

http://www.swisspanel.ch/

http://www.fors.unil.ch/

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[1] SHP_I denotes the households recruited in 1999.
[2] SHP_II denotes the households recruited in 2004.

3. SHP Additional Data (on request)

On request, users can obtain the following additional data:

(1) for imputed income data, original income data or simulated taxes data, please contact ursina.kuhn@fors.unil.ch;

(2) for paradata (call data), please contact oliver.lipps@fors.unil.ch;

(3) for the "non response survey 2004" data, please contact robin.tillmann@fors.unil.ch.

Under certain conditions, the opportunity to merge SHP data with communal data exists, please contact boris.wernli@fors.unil.ch.

For using the SHP data in a teaching context, please contact robin.tillmann@fors.unil.ch.

Moreover, users can obtain the Cross-National Equivalent File (CNEF) version of the data by signing a special contract, see http://www.swisspanel.ch/file/cnef_contract/cnef_shp_datacontract.pdf. The CNEF contains equivalently defined variables for the US - Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP), the British Household Panel Study (BHPS), the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA), the Canadian Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), and, since 2008, the Swiss Household Panel (SHP). The data are designed to allow cross-national researchers access to simplified versions of these panels.

4. SHP Data Organisation

The SHP Data Files are organised as follows:

FILE Appellation (Name)	Type	Contents
Master File – Household (SHP_MH) (in WA_ALL)	Unique	This file contains all *households* ever recorded since 1999 with information on yearly participation at the grid and household questionnaire levels and reasons for non-participation.
Master File – Individual (SHP_MP) (in WA_ALL)	Unique	This file contains all *individuals* ever recorded since 1999 with information on the sex of each person, month and year of birth, and information on the yearly participation.
Social Origin (SHP_SO) (in WA_ALL)	Unique	This file contains information on the *social origin* for all individuals which were personally interviewed in any of the waves since 1999.

Activity Calendar (SHP_CA) (in WA_ALL)	Unique	This file contains information on *the work activity calendar* for all persons interviewed by the means of the individual questionnaire.
Last Job (SHP_LJ) (in WA_ALL)	Unique	This file contains information on the *last job* for all individuals who were: a) inactive at the time of their first interview, and b) interviewed in person or by proxy in any of the waves since 1999.
Household Files (SHP$$_H_USER)	Yearly 1999-2008	These yearly files contain all households for which completed grids are available ("participating households") since 1999 with the data collected by the means of the *household questionnaires*.
Individual Files SHP$$_P_USER	Yearly 1999-2008	These yearly files contain all registered household members from "participating households" since 1999 with the data gathered by the means of the *individual and proxy questionnaires*.
Master File - Biography (SHP0_MBI)	Unique	This master file contains all individuals who filled out in 2001 or 2002 the biographical questionnaire together with the weights specific to the biographical survey.
Horizontal Biography File (SHP0_BH_USER)		This *horizontal file* contains unique *biographical data* collected from persons validly interviewed in 2001 or 2002.
Vertical Biography Files (SHP0_BV&&_USER)		These *vertical files* contain unique *biographical data* collected from persons validly interviewed in 2001 or 2002, each file corresponding to one topic (Biography Survey).
Interviewer Files (SHP$$_V_USER)	Yearly 2000, 2003-2008	These files contain interviewer characteristics and attitudes (matching of these files with household and individual data by means of the variable 'idint') (Interviewer Survey).

Note: $$ stands for the year of interview, e.g. $$ = 01 for 2001

5. Selection of SHP Samples, Cases and Files, and Assembling

The two **samples** may be easily distinguished by the variable FILTER$$ (SHP_I = 1; SHP_II = 0).

Valid cases may be easily selected by (1) the variable STATHH$$ at the household level (where 1 = Household questionnaire completed) and (2) the variable STATUS$$ at the individual level (where 0 = individual questionnaire completed).

Cross-sectional and longitudinal files are most easily created by the data user in the following order:

1)   Selection of households or individuals within the corresponding master files and creation of a "selection file".

2)   Merging of the "selection file" with corresponding household or individual files.

3)   Selection of a sub-sample based on the variables in the merged data set.

Examples of file creation are provided in SPSS, SAS and STATA syntax (Data-Syntaxes).

The biographical and interviewer data can be merged with individual files by using respectively the variables 'idpers' and 'idint', respectively.

6. SHP Data Quality

The SHP Data 1999-2008 (SHP_I and SHP_II) are among others:

- Cleaned: elimination of CATI related technical errors, standardization of reference periods.

- Labelled: the standard variable names and value labels are in English. In addition, labels are also provided in German, French and Italian.

- Verified: Sex, age, civil status of all individuals and personal links between members of households have been verified and corrected if necessary.

In particular, some variables have been re-plausibilised or constructed also for previous waves in 2007 and 2008:

1) The **variables** regarding the **social position** (Wright, CSP, Goldthorpe, Treiman and CAMSIS) were thoroughly scrutinised and have been completely reconstructed from wave 1 (1999) to wave 8 (2006) (Wernli, SHP Working Paper_2_07). The reconstruction of the social position variables leads to a considerable improvement. Though the correlations between the initially constructed social position variables and the reconstructed ones remain high (Cramer's V ≥ .83), the average longitudinal coherence from wave to wave is much stronger (Cramer's V improves from .70 to .82);

2) **Income Variables**: Cases labelled as "other error" have been rechecked and plausibilized for all waves from 2001 on. As a consequence, the number of valid cases has increased for all income variables. Household income has been recalculated where necessary. We also conducted some additional retrospective plausibility checks which lead to some corrections in the constructed yearly income variables. The original income variables are available on demand from the SHP (see SHP additional data).

3) **Education Variables**: new variables are now available allowing more differentiation at the tertiary level.

Moreover, in 2009, new variables were constructed in order to improve the analytical potential of the SHP (see our "full" User Guide). Data users will now find among others a new variable of social position (corresponding to the European Socio-economic

Classification), and a typology of professional integration (Paugam typology, syntax by Gazareth, Iglesias, and Wyss, University of Neuchâtel).

Not all the data could be verified systematically for plausibility. Although no significant data collection errors have been found up to date, data users are encouraged to be suspicious and to report any problems such as unusual marginal distributions.

7. SHP Samples and Participation

The SHP first sample (SHP_I) is a stratified random sample of private households whose members represent the non-institutional resident population in Switzerland. In 1999, the methodology section of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office drew a random sample in each of the seven major statistical regions of Switzerland, on the basis of the Swiss telephone directory (SRH – Stichprobenregister für Haushalterhebungen), which covers over 95% of all private households. Selected in this way, the households are a representative sample of the various social groups in all regions of Switzerland. However, as the interviews are carried out in the three official national languages (German, French, and Italian) only, there might be a certain bias concerning how population groups who have recently migrated to Switzerland are represented. In order to compensate for the erosion of the original 1999 sample (deaths, hospitalisation, migration, refusals), a refreshment random sample of "new" households was injected in 2004 (SHP_II) following the same methodology.

With respect to response rate, the following tables (1 and 2) indicate the number of validly interviewed households and persons for the years 1999-2008. For further information, see the http://www.swisspanel.ch/project/participation/index.php?lang=en page for all of the figures of participating units since 1999.

Table 1: Number of **households** validly interviewed in SHP_I and SHP_II for the years 1999-2008

YEAR	WAVE	SHP_I n =	%* A	%** B	SHP_II n =	%* A	%** B	SHP_I+II n =
1999	1	5,074	100	100				
2000	2	4,425	87	87				
2001	3	4,139	82	94				
2002	4	3,582	71	87				
2003	5	3,227	64	90				
2004	6/1	2,837	56	88	2,538	100	100	5,375
2005	7/2	2,457	48	87	1,799	71	71	4,256
2006	8/3	2,537	50	103	1,684	66	94	4,221
2007	9/4	2,817	56	111	1,494	58	89	4,311
2008	10/5	2,718	54	96	1,546	61	103	4,264

*These percentages are calculated on the basis of the number of interviews conducted in the first year (1999 or 2004).
**These percentages are calculated on the basis of the number of interviews conducted in the previous year. They may therefore exceed 100%. Since 2006, the number of interviews increases due to various measures taken to convert households, who were abandoned earlier because of double refusal, into respondents.

Table 2: Number of **persons** validly interviewed in SHP_I and SHP_II for the years 1999-2008

YEAR	WAVE	SHP_I n =	%* A	%** B	SHP_II n =	%* A	%** B	SHP_I+II n =	SHP_I (fully longitudinal) n =	%* A	%** B
1999	1	7,799	100	100					7,799	100	100
2000	2	7,073	91	91					6,335	81	81
2001	3	6,601	85	93					5,429	69	86
2002	4	5,700	73	86					4,480	57	83
2003	5	5,220	67	92					3,888	50	87
2004	6/1	4,413	57	85	3,654	100	100	8,067	3,076	39	79
2005	7/2	3,888	50	88	2,649	72	72	6,537	2,622	34	85
2006	8/3	4'091	52	105	2,568	70	97	6,659	2,399	31	91
2007	9/4	4,630	59	113	2,350	64	92	6,980	2,209	28	92
2008	10/5	4,494	58	97	2,410	66	103	6,904	2,060	26	93

*These percentages are calculated on the basis of the number of interviews conducted in the first year (1999 or 2004).
**These percentages are calculated on the basis of the number of interviews conducted in the previous year. They may therefore exceed 100%. Since 2006, the number of interviews increases due to various measures taken to convert households, who were abandoned earlier because of double refusal, into respondents.

8. SHP Weights

Cross-sectional and longitudinal weights correct for unit non-response, at least in part, at the household and individual levels. It is up to the users of these data to apply the appropriate weights depending on what sort of analyses they want to obtain.

It is essential to use weighting, otherwise if the appropriate weighting is not applied the estimations carried out cannot be considered to be representative of the population under observation. Cross-sectional weights always refer to the current year, both for households and for individuals, whereas longitudinal weights (individuals) always extrapolate to the population resident in Switzerland in 1999 for SHP_I and to the population resident in Switzerland in 2004 for SHP_II. The combined longitudinal weightings for SHP_I and SHP_II also refer to the population resident in Switzerland in 2004.

For more details, please see "Recommendations and Practical Examples for Using Weighting" in Documentation\Methods\Weighting.

9. SHP Biography Survey

In 2001 and 2002, a retrospective biographical survey was conducted to obtain, at a single occasion, additional information about the respondents' life course prior to the panel study. To this end, a retrospective biographical questionnaire was developed with questions regarding educational -, working -, and family history (BIO$$d-quest.pdf). This paper and pencil questionnaire was sent to the SHP_I respondents by mail and was self-administered.

In order to assess the potentially negative impact of the self-administered biographical questionnaire on the participation in subsequent waves of the yearly CATI, a "test" survey was conducted in 2001. The results showed that that the drop-out rates did not increase substantially as a result of the questionnaire sent in-between two waves Scherpenzeel et al. (SHP Working Paper_5_02). Consequently, the "main" survey was carried out in 2002 with those participants that had not been part of the "test" survey.

SHP_I *biographical data* are available for 5,560 individuals with the 2001 and 2002 surveys combined. Some variables only exist for one of the survey years (e.g. education history only for 2002), or only in an aggregated form (e.g. living arrangement for 2001). The overall participation rate was 53%, but over 80% among fully longitudinal panel survey respondents (years 1999-2004) participated in the biography survey (Budowski and Wernli, SHP Working Paper_2_04).

The Biography Files include:

a) two *horizontal files* with rows representing individuals (Biography Master File – SHP0_MBI and Biography Data File SHP0_BH_USER), and

b) one *vertical file* for **each** of the eight covered domains (living arrangement, periods outside Switzerland, changes of civil status, learned professions, education stages, work life, family events, and retirement) with rows representing "events" and not individuals, if appropriate (SHP0_BV&&_USER).

More specifically, the structure of the biography files is as follows:

The **Biography Master File** (SHP0_MBI)[3] includes both *population* weights (wp00tbgp) and *sample* weights (wp00tbgs):

idpers	q_source	wp00tbgp	wp00tbgs

The **Biography Data File** (SHP0_BH_USER.sav) are delivered in two formats:

The **horizontal file** (large format) contains 281 variables which represent the person's characteristics/states in each domain (&&) and for a fixed number of periods (* or **) denoting the domain characteristic 01.. (last two digits), as well as individual *population* weights (wp00tbgp) and *sample* weights (wp00tbgs):

idpers	q_source	Bh&&*01	Bh&&*02	Bh&&*03	....	....
	....	Bh&&**07	....	....	....	....
	....	....	....	....	wp00tbgp	wp00tbgs

The **vertical files** (SHP0_BV&&_USER) are structured as follows:

Questions and variables of all the vertical data files are described in one single document (cf. QuestionML-BIO-VERTICAL). Each vertical file includes the person identification (idpers), the source survey (q_source: 2001 or 2002), and, if there are possibly several rows per person (spells), the spell index (bv&&_idx), and finally the variables denoting the subject (bv&&001-…), abbreviated by "&&".

File including information on *living arrangement* (SHP0_BVLA_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvla_idx	bvla001	…	bvla014	bvla100

File including information on *periods outside Switzerland* (SHP0_BVSA_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvsa_idx	bvsa001	bvsa002	bvsa003

File including information on *changes of civil status* (SHP0_BVCS_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvcs_idx	bvcs001	bvcs002	bvcs003	bvcs004	bvcs005

File including information on *learned professions* (SHP0_BVLP_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvlp_idx	bvlp001	bvlp002

File including information on *education stages* (SHP0_BVED_USER):

idpers	q_source	bved_idx	bved001	bved002	bved003	bved004

File including information on *work life* (SHP0_BVWL_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvwl_idx	bvwl001	…	bvla007

File including information on *family events* (SHP0_BVFE_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvfe001	…	bvfe012

File including information on *retirement* (SHP0_BVRE_USER):

idpers	q_source	bvre001	bvre002

Two examples of data extraction from a vertical file into a horizontal file are provided in SPSS, SAS and STATA syntax (Data-Syntaxes-Biography).

10. SHP Interviewer Survey

SHP Interviewer data have been collected in the years 2000, 2003 to 2008 by means of paper-and-pencil questionnaires. The questionnaires measure a number of interviewer characteristics: demographic traits such as sex, age, language and education, but also characteristics such as the attitude of the interviewers towards this type of study and towards sensitive questions. According to the SHP research interests, the questionnaires have been changing over time.

In 2001, the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) carried out a first analysis of the interviewer effects on the response and on the data of the second panel wave (interviewer data for 2000, SHP_I, wave 2). The two objectives of this study were (Scherpenzeel, SHP

Working Paper_8_02): first, to test whether there is variance among interviewers, and second, to relate possible interviewer effects to the characteristics of the interviewers as measured by the interviewer questionnaire.

In 2004 and 2005, the study of the interviewer effects was repeated and extended. (Scherpenzeel, SHP Working Paper_3_05; Lipps, SHP Working Paper_2_05).

Attention!

The values of the variable "idint" in the Interviewer data files have been coded in order to protect the identity of the Interviewers. Consequently, the merging of the Interviewer-data with the Household and Individual level files is only possible after de-coding. Please contact oliver.lipps@fors.unil.ch.

Contact

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us: swisspanel@fors.unil.ch
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Appendix: Regulations regarding data use and data protection

- The use of the SHP data for **commercial purposes** is strictly forbidden.
- The SHP data are for the **exclusive use of the person(s) signing the contract**; it is strictly forbidden to make part or all of the data available to a third party. In a research team, all users have to sign the contract individually.
- **Research topics and changes** thereof are to be reported to the SHP team. Intended publications or semi-formal reports ("grey literature") using the SHP data must be announced as soon as possible to the SHP-team.
- A copy of **research reports and manuscripts** submitted to journals must be sent to the SHP-Team. In case of agreement of the author these documents will be made available on the SHP website.
- Users of SHP data automatically become members of the **research network "Living in Switzerland"**; contact information, research interests and title of reports and publications are displayed on the SHP website.
- **Publications** in paper or electronic format based on SHP data must carry the following mention: "This study has been realized using the data collected by the Swiss Household Panel (SHP), which is based at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences FORS. The project is financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation."(see Data/acquiring the data on our website for the French and German versions of this mention).
- **Publications tables and figures** based on SHP data in paper or electronic format must carry the following mention: "Source: Swiss Household Panel (SHP)".
- Data users and collaborators are to comply with the **Swiss Regulations regarding data protection**: in particular, users are to refrain from trying to identify a particular household or person and are strictly prohibited to use information for anything other than scientific research purposes. **Published results** shall not contain any information making it possible to identify any SHP household or interviewed person.